

## Abstract

5 The present invention relates to an electronic  
database search engine comprising an electronic memory  
device suitable for storing and releasing elements from  
the database, a display unit, a user interface for  
selecting and displaying at least one element from the  
database on the display unit, and control means for  
controlling the user interface, which user interface  
10 allocates icons to the elements of the database, which  
icons are suitable for display on the display unit at  
mutual distances that depend on the elements' degree of  
dissimilarity, wherein the user interface at initial  
utilization displays at least some icons on the display  
15 unit. With the control means any arbitrary position can  
be selected on the display unit and, depending on the  
control means, the user interface displays or removes an  
icon that relates to an element of the database and of  
which degree of dissimilarity, in respect of the elements  
20 whose corresponding icons are displayed elsewhere on the  
display unit, corresponds with the distance taken up by  
the selected position in relation to the icons displayed  
elsewhere on the display unit.

Patented June 2, 1981